

Carnegie Library
402 East Oklahoma Avenue
Guthrie
Logan County
Oklahoma

HABS No. OK-14

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. OK-14

CARNEGIE LIBRARY

Location: 402 E. Oklahoma Ave., (NE corner, Oklahoma and Ash), Guthrie, Logan County, Oklahoma

Present Owner: The City of Guthrie

Present Occupant: The Oklahoma Territorial Museum

Present Use: Storage, display and offices for the adjoining Oklahoma Territorial Museum

Statement of Significance: This Second Renaissance Revival structure was the scene of numerous historic events: the inauguration of both the last of the territorial governors and the first Governor of Statehood Oklahoma. The second Carnegie library in Oklahoma, it grew from the efforts of the organizers of one of the earliest libraries in Oklahoma, to which it is successor. It is remarkable for the number of ways in which it diverges from Andrew Carnegie's ideas of what a library building should be.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of Erection: The cornerstone was laid July 2, 1902. The building was dedicated on May 20, 1903, although it had been occupied since February of that year.
2. Architect: J. H. Bennett
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a complete chain of title to lots 13, 14, and 15 block 46, East Guthrie, the property on which the building now stands. Reference is to the Office of the Clerk of Logan County, Oklahoma:

1891 Quit claim deed February 10, 1891
recorded February 11, 1891 lot 13
Book 2 page 16
Louis de Steigneur
to
Minerva Ryan

1892 Trustee deed February 4, 1892
recorded February 15, 1892 lot 13
Book D page 193
Trustees for the Townsite of East Guthrie
to
Minerva Ryan

Trustee deed February 4, 1892
recorded February 16, 1892 lot 14
Book D page 197
Trustees for the Townsite of East Guthrie
to
R. C. Cottingham

same as above, Book D page 202

Trustee deed February 4, 1892
recorded February 15, 1892 lot 15
Book D page 178
Trustees for the Townsite of East Guthrie
to
Adolph Burmester

1893 Quit claim deed May 1, 1893
recorded June 27, 1893 lot 14
Book 7 page 88
R. C. Cottingham
to
Isolene Cottingham

Warranty deed November 10, 1893
recorded November 17, 1893 lot 13
Book page
Minerva Ryan
to
Martha Clark

1896 Tax deed September 10, 1896
recorded October 15, 1896 lot 13
Book 9 page 177
Treasurer for Logan County
to
N. F. Frazier

1897 Quit claim deed October 30, 1897
recorded December 27, 1901 lot 15
Book 8 page 514
N. F. Frazier
to
Adolph Burmester

1899 Warranty deed July 26, 1899
recorded September 6, 1899 lot 13
Book 17 page 258
Martha Clark and Lorenzo Clark
to
Florence H. Stumpff

1900 Warranty deed October 3, 1900
recorded October 4, 1900 lot 13
Book 20 page 164

Florence H. Stumpff
to
Robert A. Gaffney

1901 Warranty deed July 1, 1901
recorded July 16, 1901 lot 14
Book 22 page 70
R.C. Cunningham et ux
to
Frank M. Rinehart

Warranty deed July 16, 1901
recorded July 16, 1901 lot 14
Book 22 page 68
Frank M. Rinehart
to
W.P. Eager

Warranty deed December 7, 1901
recorded December 27, 1901 lot 15
Book page 604
Adolph Burmester
to
The City of Guthrie

Book 2 page 441, 20 December, 1901
The City Council of Guthrie resolves to buy the lot
for \$490 and agrees not to build a fire station in
the north half of block 52, East Guthrie, or pay
\$500 damages to W.P. Eager.

Warranty deed December 20, 1901
recorded December 27, 1901 lot 14
Book 22 page 606
W.P. Eager
to
The City of Guthrie

Warranty deed December 24, 1901
recorded December 27, 1901 lot 13
Book 22 page 605
Robert A. Gaffney
to
The City of Guthrie

While the Territorial Museum occupies the building,
it is still owned by the city.

4. Contractor, suppliers:

- a. Contractor: H.J. Vandenburg, selected with a bid of
\$20,823 (minutes of the Board of Directors, March 22,
1902).

b. Supplier: unknown

5. Original plan and construction: There is no information on the first conception of the building save what is mentioned in the minutes of the Library Board. There are no plans in the possession of the Oklahoma Historical Society (which holds all other records of the Carnegie Library) or the Carnegie Foundation.

On April 1, 1902, the Board received a letter from the office of Andrew Carnegie expressing Mr. Carnegie's disapproval of domes, such as had been planned for the building, and requesting its deletion from the scheme. A modified proposal was offered by Bennett which did not meet with the approval of the board, and several alternatives were submitted by Bennett the following day, April 2. Of these one was chosen by the board and inasmuch as the issue never rose again, it may be assumed that the library was built according to that modification of the dome (minutes of the Board of Director, April 1 and 2, (1902). A pamphlet appeared in 1902 as a souvenir of the current World's Fair from the Oklahoma Exhibit in which a drawing of the Carnegie Library appears. This is marked with the logo of Bennett's office, and the dome of the building, while of similar size and profile to the existing dome, is topped by a small lantern which does not now exist. This may be the modification (small as it is) which was expected to, and apparently did, mollify Mr. Carnegie.

Other changes discussed at the April 1st meeting were widening the porch, changing the steps, enlarging the pillars, providing a tile roof instead of shingle. Messrs. Ramsay and Lillie were appointed to consult with Bennett on the changes but there is no record of the result.

On August 22, 1902, Vandenburg was asked to provide a stair or elevator from the boiler room up to the stack room. On August 29 the decision was made to change the three foot red sandstone retaining wall to one of white stone of a height of one and one half feet (minutes of the Board of Directors of the dates given). Neither of these suggestions were ever carried out.

6. Alterations and additions: The building was plagued from the very first (and still is) by a leaking roof. After numerous attempts at repair, a contract was let to the New York Hardware Company of Guthrie to build a completely new roof at a cost of \$999.50, the project to be superintended by a Mr. Younger (minutes of the Board of Directors, June 5, 1905). In 1907 a duct was added to the lavatory on the west side of the ground floor, which had previously had no ventilation (minutes, October 2, 1907). During

the normal process of painting and upkeep four quotations from famous authors which had been frescoed around the rotunda were obliterated and have not been restored.

The only substantial alteration to the building was made to the basement. Originally there was a "pit" on the eastern end of the ground floor which ran the length of the building north and south. This was floored but the walls were not plastered and was in effect a long room with a height of two stories. It was used for the first few decades as a gymnasium, the fixtures and equipment of which are listed in the minutes of the Board of Directors after the entry for November 2, 1905. The entire area was floored over sometime after 1948, the northern portion being raised about twenty-four inches above the rest to provide a room of useable height beneath. The stairs were changed from a flight descending south from the center of the building to one descending toward the north, about twenty feet north of the original stair. There is thought to have been a small loft or balcony running north and south over part of the length of the gymnasium, with showers and changing rooms beneath. The exact arrangement of these features is at present uncertain. After these alterations were made a check out counter was constructed, forming an "L" from a point near the entrance, turning the corner with the existing wall, and ending near the new stair. This was for the use of the members of "Teen Town," a social club for local youth.

At present, much of the area of the ground floor is being converted to offices and work rooms for the new Territorial Museum (discussion of basement taken from interviews with Mr. Ted Gatewood, 713 College Ave., Guthrie; Ruth Patterson, 215 N. Elm St., Guthrie; and Mr. R. Siphers, President, First National Bank, Guthrie; August, 1973).

- a. [Reference to the following is Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries]. The Carnegie Library violates nearly every idea of Andrew Carnegie on the subject of Library Buildings. The letter of April 1, 1902, in which Mr. Carnegie's disapproval of domes is expressed, and which was more or less ignored subsequently, is an example of this phenomenon. Such features as tall windows, fireplaces, and specialized rooms for meetings or purposes other than those related strictly to the operation of a lending library, were looked down upon because they consumed space which might be put to use for storage of books. These features are all present in the Guthrie Carnegie Library. The use of the basement as a gymnasium would have been equally abhorrent to Carnegie had he known its eventual purpose. In that stage of his philanthropic career he neglected to add "strings" to his grants, which were so

nearly unconditional that Carnegie found himself writing numerous letters to chastise the recipients of his gifts for the misuse (as he saw it) of donated funds. The concept of a new building designed specifically for use as a library building was unheard of at the time, and his ideas made little impression, the weight of his contribution notwithstanding. As proud as Guthrie might have been of its new building, it stood as a paradigm of what Andrew Carnegie disliked most, from the tip of the dome to its upright piano.

B. Historical persons and events connected with the structure:

1. F. B. Lillie. Pioneer druggist, Lillie came to Guthrie on the run of 1889 and established the first drugstore of the territory and acquired Pharmacists License No. 1. He had in his establishment a circulating library of three hundred volumes which he donated to the library of the Guthrie Federated Clubs (from which the Carnegie Library grew) in 1900. He served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Carnegie Library throughout the period in which Guthrie was Territorial and State Capital (minutes of the Board of Directors, Scrapbook).
2. Fred L. Wenner, secretary to Territorial Governor Barnes and later the major historian of Oklahoma, was active in Library projects, but was not a member of the board. The first meeting of the group which was eventually to become the Library, the Acorn Club, was held in his home in 1899 (Scrapbook of the Guthrie Public Library).
3. Mrs. Fegan, wife of a prominent attorney, was first chairman of the Board of Directors.
4. Mr. Ramsay, a townsman of Andrew Carnegie in Scotland, was instrumental in securing the grant (Scrapbook of the Guthrie Public Library).
5. Late in 1905 the Last Territorial Governor of Oklahoma, Frank Frantz, was inaugurated on the steps of the library, an event which drew the largest crowd in the history of Guthrie to that date. The inauguration was highlighted by a parade in which members of the G.A.R. and Confederate veterans, as well as the Rough Riders ("full twenty five of Captain Frantz's former comrades") participated [Purcell Register, January 19, 1906, page 7, col. 6].
6. Governor Haskell, first Governor under Statehood and infamous in Guthrie for his role in the removal of the capitol, was sworn into office on the Library steps at 10:15 a.m., Saturday, November 16, 1907. Haskell had been waiting in his room at the Hotel Royal where he received the telegram informing him that Theodore Roosevelt had signed the Statehood Bill which passed Congress on

June 16, 1906. The only official who could be found that had transferred from Territorial to State status was Leslie G. Niblack, editor of the Guthrie Daily Leader and a notary public. The oath of Office was first administered at the hotel, and later formalized on the steps of the Library. The suddenness with which statehood had been announced left no time for elaborate decorations, and the ceremonies were held on a simple pine platform. The parade which celebrated the event was reported to be huge.

Statehood was conferred upon Oklahoma and Indian Territory, which had been separate political units, as a single entity, and the union of the two was symbolized, after the inauguration, by a mock wedding between representatives of the respective territories: "C.G. Jones, of Oklahoma City, a prominent Republican, then proposed matrimony to Indian Territory in a brief address. W.A. Durant, a Choctaw Indian, replied in an eloquent address on behalf of Indian Territory, speaking for the bride, Mrs. Leo Bennett, of Muskogee" [Mrs. Bennett was Cherokee] (Shawnee Daily Herald, November 17, 1907, p. 1, col. 1).

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: The Bennett Drawing of the building with its cupola may be found in Souvenir, published in 1902 by the Leader Publishing Company of Guthrie as a memento of the St. Louis World's Fair.

The Armantrout Brothers, photographers, Guthrie, were commissioned by the Board of Directors of the Carnegie Library in 1904 (minutes, March 3, 1904) to take photographs to be sent to an exhibit on Carnegie Libraries in St. Louis. Prints of these are now in the possession of the Guthrie Public Library, and are rare interior shots, including one of the Rotunda which shows one of the four frescoed mottoes which originally graced the dome, the only such record extant.

The photograph collections of the Oklahoma Historical Society and the Swearingen, Lillie and Armantrout Collections of the Western History Archives of the University of Oklahoma at Norman all contain many old photographs of the building, especially those dealing with the two inaugurations.

2. Bibliography:

- a. Primary and unpublished sources:

1. The Alva Review, July 10, 1902, page 2, col. 1 (cornerstone ceremonies).

2. Deed Records, Office of the Clerk of Logan County.
 3. Interviews; July-August 1973
 - a. Col. Bailey Hanes 1201 E. Vilas.
 - b. Ruth Patterson 215 N. Elm.
 - c. Ted Gatewood 713 E. College.
 - d. Roland Sifers, President First National Bank, Guthrie.
 4. Minutes of the Board of Directors of the Carnegie Library, 1901-1910.
 5. Purcell Register, January 19, 1906, page 7 col. 6 (inauguration of Governor Frantz).
 6. "Sanborn Insurance Maps of Guthrie, Oklahoma Logan County, October 1903," Copyright 1903 by the Sanborn Map Co. (original, complete).
 7. Scrapbook of Carnegie Library History, in possession of Guthrie Public Library.
 8. Shawnee Daily Herald, November 16, 1907, page 1, col. 1 (inauguration of Governor Haskell).
 9. The State Capital, July 3, 1902 (cornerstone ceremonies) and April 9, 1902 (site cleared for construction).
- b. Secondary and published sources:
1. Bobinski, George S., Assistant Dean, School of Library Science, University of Kentucky. Carnegie Libraries, Their Impact on American Public Library Development. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.
 2. Chronicles of Oklahoma, vol. XLVII, p. 227, vol. XLVIII p. 494.
 3. Oklahoma Illustrated, Leader Publishing Co., 1894.
 4. Souvenir, 1902. Published by the State Capital Publishing Company. A souvenir pamphlet of the Saint Louis World's Fair, 1902, p. 11.
3. Likely sources not yet investigated:
- a. The remainder of the records of the Carnegie Library, including check stubs, are available at the Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City.

- b. Bennett's records, not yet located.
- c. Records of the Carnegie Foundation.
- d. Newspaper files, Oklahoma Historical Society, the Guthrie Daily Leader, the Daily State Capital.

Prepared by John D. Hnedak
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Historic American
Buildings Survey
1973

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Carnegie Library is one story with a basement. Built of sandstone and brick, this classically inspired building has a hipped roof surmounted by a dome and surrounded by a parapet with projecting pediments. The front entrance is reached by seventeen steps, which lead to a shallow portico. The symmetrical front elevation has three identical windows flanking each side of the entrance. "Carnegie Library" is emblazoned on the frieze. For additional information, see Town of Guthrie (OK-10).

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Oklahoma Historical Society, which provided funds. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1973 at the Historic American Buildings Survey field office, Guthrie, Oklahoma, by Prof. John C. Haggard (Syracuse University), Project Supervisor; John D. Hnedak (Cornell University), Project Historian; William E. Barrett, Project Photographer; and student architects: Barry Gryb (Iowa State University), John Robbins (University of Virginia), Julian Smith (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Howard Takenaka (University of Oregon).